

## Case study Lean Enterprise Training Programme

### **The scenario**

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Skillnets is an enterprise-led support body whose mission is to enhance the skills of people in employment in Irish industry to support competitiveness and employability. Skillnets is funded from the National Training Fund and its stakeholders include leading employer and employee representative bodies - IBEC, Chambers Ireland, CIF, SFA, and ICTU.

WBS were contacted by Skillnets with a view to delivering a series of training courses which would introduce senior managers to the concept of lean thinking.

The target audience included senior managers from a diverse range of companies including toys and games, pharmaceutical, and aerospace.

### **The programme**

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A series of 7 closely related 1-day training courses were designed for the programme "Towards the Lean Enterprise":

- Lean and the Concept of Value
- Establishing Strategic Direction
- The Process Driven Organisation
- Competent People in a Changing and Productive Climate
- Focussing the Organisation on Quality
- Supply Chain Advantage
- New Product/Service Development Pipeline

The course content went beyond the organisation itself and also included the organisation's interaction with suppliers and customers.

Whilst the individual courses could be delivered as stand-alone courses they all interlinked and were equally suitable for manufacturing as well as service sector companies.

### **The mechanism**

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The immediate challenge was to design a series of training courses which would appeal to an audience of senior managers from different business sectors, pitched at the right level and achievable within existing budget restraints.

To achieve this WBS worked closely with the organisers at Skillnets to get the course content and level of complexity right.

Once the course content was agreed and approved by Skillnets, WBS produced course descriptions which were then included in the marketing material for the programme.

A course schedule was drawn up and agreed with all participating companies before training started. On this occasion the 7 courses were spread over 4 months from September to December.

The venue for the training programme was the Skillnets organisers' offices in Athlone, Ireland.



## The benefits

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### Highly interactive and challenging

- All WBS courses are designed to involve the participants in exercises and discussion to reinforce the learning
- Through discussions delegates' current practice is often challenged

### Up-to-date information

- The trainers combine current theory with real life examples from their work in the field as consultants

### Realistic information

- WBS courses are open and honest about the limitations of theory in its pure form and the trainers include examples of real life situations where Lean did not work and they took a different approach to achieve results.

## Participant feedback

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- Excellent presentation style
- Good overview of a complex subject
- A lot of ground covered effectively
- Several immediate ideas to apply back at base
- General participation and discussion process was very good
- Good mix of lecture and exercises
- Excellent delivery – good mix of theory and practical
- All managers or senior managers should have these courses

## The next steps

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Given the success of "Towards the Lean Enterprise", WBS were retained to deliver the programme again.

WBS was also asked to work with Skillnets to further promote and sell the training programme.

